

# Building a **Circular** City

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# Austin Resource Recovery

- **Mission:** We provide essential services that protect people and our planets.
- **Vision:** Driving the global transformation of traditional waste management to sustainable resource recovery.
- The City of Austin has a goal to reach zero waste by 2040 (90% diversion from landfill).



**Support Circular Businesses**



**Change Behavior**



**Lead by Example**

# Circular Economy Program

# Business Retention & Engagement





# Relationships inform programming

- Identify circular businesses in your community
- Meet with them!
  - Build relationships
  - Understand pain points
  - Be super connectors (including with other city programs)
- Stay connected
  - Newsletter & Slack channel: Current events, announcements, and resources
  - Enterprise Guide: Evergreen content
- Build programming based on what you learn



# Roundtables



# Circular Showcase



# Circular Accelerator



# Off-campus move-out donation drive







**Move-in gap (“turn”)**



**On-campus dorm move-out/resale  
program, est. 2005**



**What about off campus?**



**MoveOutATX, est. 2018!**



**500-600 furniture pieces in 4-5 days**



**Free Furniture Market, est. 2022**





**1,374 visitors came!**



**223 tons = \$500K in value**



# Takeaways

- Partnerships are key
- YOY, steady participation, reaching a plateau
- Increasing number of stations doesn't increase amount collected
- More material to be captured: Students move out from May to July

# No University? No Problem!

- Citywide free sale/community swap
  - Have a plan for leftover items (partners!)
- Spring cleaning donation event
  - Work with partners to staff donation sites and transport and process materials



**SPRING FREE STORE**  
Clothing, home goods, toys, and more for the taking this weekend (May 17 & 18)!

**WHO:** Open to everyone!

**WHERE:** Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Community Center, 285 Livingston St.

**WHEN:** Friday @ 5pm - 8pm & Saturday @ 10am - 5pm

Remember to bring your own bags to shop!

THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

The graphic features a central illustration of a clothing rack with a white shirt, a blue dress, and brown pants, with a blue handbag and a pair of white boots on the floor in front of it. The background is a mix of green and blue geometric shapes.

# Repair Education: Fix-It Austin





**Fix-It Clinics est. 2015**



# Online Repair Workshops

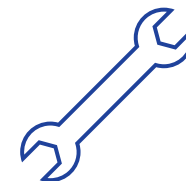
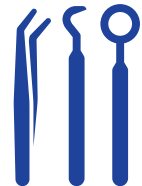


**Who are we not reaching? Why?**



# The Future of Fix-It Austin

- Monthly repair workshops beginning this month
- Exploring official partnerships with other City departments
- Tool library: Currently have a small tool library at one library location





# Start Your Own!



Recruit volunteers: Social media, flyers, clubs & community groups, local businesses with volunteer programs (tech companies, e-waste processors, national labs).



Find space: Libraries and community centers.



Get tools: Purchase, solicit donations from businesses or community members

# Circular City Operations





# Why?

- Walk the walk before asking our community to walk alongside us
- 15,000+ staff, more than 40 departments
- Signatories of U.S. Plastics Pact and Ellen MacArthur Foundation New Plastics Economy
- Pilot solutions to understand impacts



# Challenges

- Decentralized operations
- Thousands of contracts and procurement card holders
- No overarching sustainable purchasing policy or dedicated staff in place yet

# Improve Diversion at City Facilities



## Carrots

- Internal webpage for resources
- Event diversion assistance
- Facility site assessments
- Educational presentations

## Sticks

- Minimum standard policy
- Designated point person in each department

# Look Upstream

- Reduce single-use plastics
  - Data dashboard
  - Trash bags with high PCR content
  - Sustainable purchasing resources
  - Reusable dish kits
- Develop sustainability language for contracts
- Share surplus commodities
- Send surplus furniture to Reuse Warehouse



# Thank you!

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